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(54) Title: PRESENILIN ENHANCERS

(57) Abstract: The invention provides methods and compositions relating to pen polypeptides having pen-specific structure and activity, related polynucleotides and modulators of pen function. The invention provides isolated pen hybridization probes and primers capable of specifically hybridizing with natural pen genes, pen-specific binding agents such as specific antibodies, and methods of making and using the subject compositions in diagnosis (e.g. genetic hybridization screens for pen transcripts), therapy (e.g. pen inhibitors to modulate APP processing) and in the biopharmaceutical industry (e.g. as immunogens, reagents for screening chemical libraries for lead pharmacological agents, etc.).

Presenilin Enhancers

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INTRODUCTION

Field of the Invention

The field of this invention is proteins which modulate presenilin function.

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Background

Azheimer's disease is a degenerative disorder of the central nervous system which causes memory impairment and cognitive loss during mid to late life. The disease is characterized by two primary pathological features, extracellular amyloid plaques in the brain, and intra-neuronal neurofibrillary tangles. These lesions inhibit neuronal and glial cell function, and lead to synaptic loss and dementia. Both early and late onset forms of the disease have been shown to have genetic components, and four genes have been definitively associated with increased risk for AD: APP, PS1, PS2 and ApoE. These genes are functionally linked by their roles in the production, transport, and/or elimination of, amyloid- β (A β), the primary constituent of Alzheimer's amyloid plaques (reviewed in Selkoe, D. 1999, Nature 399 supp: A23).

Alzheimer's amyloid plaques are comprised largely of the 40-42 amino acid peptide A β (Glenner, G. G., and Wong, C. W., 1984 Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun.122:1131). A β is derived by proteolytic cleavage from the b-Amyloid Precursor Protein, or β APP (Kang J. et al. 1987, Nature 325:733). Three secretase activities cleave APP to generate the A β peptide or a shorter, alternative cleavage product called p3. β -secretase generates the N-terminus of A β , while α -secretase cleaves internal to A β sequences to generate the N-terminus of p3. γ -secretase cleaves the C-terminal β and α secretase products of APP to generate the heterogeneous C-terminal ends of A β and p3. APP mutations found in familial Alzheimer's disease (FAD) pedigrees are clustered around the three secretase cleavage sites

(Goate, A., et al. 1991, Nature 349:704; Murrell, J., et al. 1991, Science 254: 97; Chartier-Harlin et al. 1991, Nature 353: 844; Mullan, M. et al. 1992, Nature Genet. 1: 345; Levy, E. et al., 1990, Science 248: 1124; Hendriks, L. et al. 1992, Nature Genet. 1:218) and they each increases total A β (A β 42 + A β 40) or increases the A β 42/40 ratio. Since A β 42 precipitates more readily in vitro and is the primary component of early forms of amyloid deposits called diffuse plaques, it has been postulated that increased systemic A β 42 could lead to earlier formation of plaque, and earlier onset of AD.

Family studies identified two other genes, presentilin-1 (PS1) and presentilin-2 (PS2), associated with dominantly inherited, early onset AD, (Sherrington, R. et al. 1995, Nature 375: 754; Levy-Lahad, E. et al. 1995, Science 269: 973; Rogaev., E. I. et al. 1995, Nature 376: 775). These proteins are similar to each other in sequence and encode polytopic membrane proteins with 8 transmembrane segments. Studies in FAD human cell lines, in transfected cells, and in transgenic mice have demonstrated that the PS FAD mutations cause a change in the processing pattern of APP, resulting in an increased ratio of Aβ 42/40 (Scheuner, D. et al. 1996, Nat. Med. 2: 864; Citron, M. et al. 1997, Nat. Med. 3:67; Borchelt, D. et al. 1996, Neuron 17: 1005; Duff, K. et al. 1996, Nature 383: 710; Tomita, T. et al. 1997, PNAS 94:2025). Studies on PS1 knockout mice demonstrated that loss of PS1 function leads to reduction in Aβ production due to a reduction of γ-secretase activity (De Strooper, B. et al. 1998, Nature 391: 387). Presenilin function is thus implicated in the activity of γ-secretase in two ways: missense mutations alter γ-secretase cleavage specificity, while loss of presenilin activity leads to loss of γ-secretase activity.

Inhibition of presentilin activity decreases Aβ production and is thus a potentially useful therapeutic approach to Alzheimer's disease. However, despite the functional link to γ-secretase activity and the generation of Aβ, the biochemical nature of PS activity is poorly understood. Various functions have been proposed, including action in the ER and/or Golgi complex as a chaperone for APP, Notch, and/or γ-secretase (Thinakaran, G. et al. 1998, Neurobiol. Dis. 4: 438), activity as a novel aspartyl protease, i.e. as γ-secretase itself (Wolfe, M. S. et al. 1999, Nature 398: 513), and potential roles in the response to oxidative stress and apoptosis (Wolozin, B. et al. 1996, Science 274:1710; vito, P. et al. 1997, J. Biol. Chem 272: 28315; Guo, Q., et al. 1997, J. Neurosci. 17: 4212). The absence of a clear functional assay increases the difficulty of designing useful small molecule therapeutics targeted at presentlin.

An alternative strategy to targeting presentilin is to discover additional proteins which act together with presentilins in the pathway of γ -secretase and A β production and which might be more amenable to drug development. One useful method for the discovery of such novel targets is to perform genetic screens in model organisms such as Drosophila and C. elegans for genes that interact with presentilins.

Invertebrate orthologues of the PS genes have been identified by both sequence searches and genetic screens. The C. elegans genome contains three presenilin genes, sel-12 (suppressor and/or enhancer of lin-12; Levitan, D. et al. 1995, Nature 377:351), hop-1 (homolog of presenilin; Li, X. et al, 1997, PNAS 94:12204) and spe-4 (spermatogenesis defective; L'Hernault et al., 1992, J. Cell Biol. 119:55). sel-12, hop-1 and spe-4 have 48, 35 and 23% sequence similarity, respectively, to PS1 and 2. sel-12 and hop-1 have overlapping functions in several tissues (see below), while spe-4 appears to perform an independent function in the male germ line. Rescue experiments using transgenes have shown that human PS1 and PS2 can rescue phenotypes caused by loss of sel-12, demonstrating that presenilin function has been conserved from nematodes to mammals (Levitan, D. et al. 1996, Nature 377:351; Baumeister, R. et al. 1997, Genes Function 1: 149).

Sel-12 was identified genetically as a suppressor of an activated allele of the Notch gene lin-12. This discovery established a functional link between presentilin activity and activity of the Notch signaling pathway. In vivo experiments in mice (Herreman, A. et al. 1999, PNAS 96:11872), Drosophila (Struhl, G. et al. 1999, Nature 398: 522; Ye, Y. et al. 1999 Nature 398:525) and C. elegans (Li, X. et al, 1997, PNAS 94:12204; Westlund, B. et al. 1999, PNAS 96:2497) have demonstrated that the phenotype of complete loss of presentilin activity corresponds very well with the complete elimination of Notch signaling in the organism, suggesting that presentilins are absolutely required for Notch signaling activity. Notch receptors are single pass transmembrane proteins present at the cell surface that mediate cell-cell signaling events critical to the differentiation of many embryonic and adult tissues in invertebrates and vertebrates. Signaling involves ligand-dependent cleavage of Notch at the inner face of the transmembrane segment, and subsequent nuclear translocation of the C-terminal domain. Analysis of Notch processing in cell culture and in vivo has further demonstrated that presentlins are required for the ligand dependent cleavage event that releases the Notch intracellular domain from the transmembrane domain (Struhl, G. et al.

1999, Nature 398: 522; De Strooper, B. et al. 1999 Nature 398: 518). The parallel requirement for presentiin in both the Notch and APP cleavages suggests that the Notch signaling pathway could be a useful surrogate assay in place of Ab production in screens for presentiin pathway genes.

Mutations in the C. elegans presentlins sel-12 and hop-1 result in phenotypes associated with defective signaling by the C. elegans Notch receptors lin-12 and glp-1. Loss of hop-1 alone results in no obvious phenotypes. Loss of sel-12 results in a strong egg-laying defective phenotype and vulval defects reminiscent of lin-12 mutations. Loss of both sel-12 and hop-1 produces more severe Notch phenotypes that seen in sel-12 alone. The specific phenotypes observed in the sel-12; hop-1 double mutants depends on whether these worms inherit maternal wild type presentlin activity. When maternally provided sel-12+ activity is present, the double mutant displays a novel egg-laying defective phenotype and all progeny arrest during embryogenesis with glp-1-like developmental defects. In the absence of maternal sel-12+ activity the double mutant exhibits a stonger phenotype of sterility with germline proliferation defects characteristic of glp-1 mutants. Together, this set of properties indicates that sel-12 and hop-1 are partially redundant and act coordinately to promote signaling by the two C. elegans Notch receptors.

The partial redundancy between sel-12 and hop-1 activities made it possible to look for enhancers of sel-12 loss of function alleles that would produce a phenotype equivalent to the sel-12;hop-1 double mutant. This enhancer screen identified two new genes which were named pen-1 and 2 (pen = presenilin enhancer) and which are required for presenilin function. Based on the phenotypes of the pen genes, we have identified a third presenilin enhancer gene, aph-2. The pen-1, pen-2 and aph-2 gene sequences identify orthologous genes in humans and other animals, including pen-1B. These genes and the processes they regulate are targets for the development of therapeutics for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

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Relevant Art

Sequences related to a human pen-1 are found, inter alia, in WO9855508, WO9855508, WO9906554 and in Unigene CGI-78 (GI#6911522 and GI#4929623)

Sequences related to a human pen-2 are found, inter alia, in AD000671 (genomic) and GI#3601371 (cDNA).

Sequences related to a human Aph-2 are found inter alia, in WO 9845435, WO 9845436, WO 9300353 and (KIAA0253, DNA GI1665772, protein GI 1665773).

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Numerous ESTs were found in public databases containing pieces of the natural human pen-1B sequence disclosed herein, including ns43g08.s1 (GI# 2874520, not annotated) and ESTs of Unigen contig Hs.42954 (53% similar to pen-1 (CGI-78)), including: AI538204 (IMAGE:2189986); AA808355 (IMAGE:1334417); N21153 (IMAGE:264868); AI204164 (IMAGE:1734840); AI001990 (IMAGE:1619191); AA578718 (IMAGE:953241); AA887975 (IMAGE:1160119); AI004282 (IMAGE:1626004); AI188040 (IMAGE:1738954); AI192033 (IMAGE:1738659); AI005113 (IMAGE:1626277); AW118908 (IMAGE:2605631); AI760754 (IMAGE:2398349); AA805770 (IMAGE:1186430); AA805757 (IMAGE:1186406); AW182071 (IMAGE:2662428); AA805773 (IMAGE:1186436); AI301191 (IMAGE:1897253); AA976455 (IMAGE:1589895); and N31710 (IMAGE:271292).

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention provides methods, compositions and systems relating to presentilin enhancer proteins (pens), including methods for modulating (e.g. enhancing or inhibiting) and detecting presentilin-pen interactions. In a particular embodiment, the method provides for specifically detecting a stress that alters a functional interaction of a presentilin enhancer (pen) with upstream or downstream Notch or APP processing by: (i) introducing a predetermined stress into a system which provides a functional interaction of a pen with Notch or APP processing, whereby the system provides a stress-biased interaction of the pen with Notch or APP processing, wherein the absence of the stress, the system provides unbiased interaction of the pen with Notch or APP processing; and (ii) detecting the stress-biased interaction of the pen with Notch or APP processing, wherein a difference between the stress-biased and unbiased interactions indicates that the stress alters the interaction of the pen with Notch or APP processing.

The system may be a viable cell expressing the pen wherein the pen expression is determined to be non-natural or pathogenic, or an in vitro, cell-free mixture comprising a determined amount of the pen. A wide variety of embodiments are encompassed; for example, wherein the system is the viable cell, in situ or in vitro, and the stress is a

pharmacologically active agent or a deficiency in functional expression of the pen, such as by virtue of genomic disruption of otherwise endogenous alleles encoding the pen or coexpression of a polynucleotide comprising a sequence antisense of an endogenous allele encoding the pen. Alternatively, the system may be the in vitro, cell-free mixture and the stress is a pharmacologically active agent. The stress-biased interaction of the pen with Notch or APP processing may be detected by any convenient means or marker, such as detecting an indication of Alzheimer's disease, a transcriptional reporter of notch, generation of a downstream product such as $A\beta$ or a structural alteration in the pen, such as with a specific antibody.

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The invention provides a variety of other methods and compositions relating to pen polypeptides having pen-specific structure and activity, related polynucleotides and modulators of pen function. The pen polypeptides may be recombinantly produced from transformed host cells from the subject pen polypeptide encoding nucleic acids or purified from natural sources such as mammalian cells. The invention provides isolated pen hybridization probes and primers capable of specifically hybridizing with natural pen genes, pen-specific binding agents such as specific antibodies, agonists and antagonists, and methods of making and using the subject compositions in diagnosis (e.g. genetic hybridization screens for pen transcripts), therapy (e.g. pen inhibitors to modulate Aβ production) and in the biopharmaceutical industry (e.g. as immunogens, reagents for isolating natural pen genes and transcripts, reagents for screening chemical libraries for lead pharmacological agents, etc.). In a particular aspect, the pen methods and compositions relate to pen-1B polypeptides.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The invention provides methods, compositions and systems relating to present in enhancer proteins (pens), including methods for modulating (e.g. enhancing or inhibiting) and/or detecting an interaction between a pen and Notch or APP processing. In a particular embodiment, the method provides for specifically detecting a stress that alters a functional interaction of a present in enhancer (pen) with Notch or APP processing.

The pen is independently selected from a pen-1, pen-1B, pen-2 and Aph-2 polypeptide. These names are used generically to refer to polypeptides which comprise a

disclosed parental sequence, comprise specified fragments thereof, or have sequence similarity to a disclosed parental sequence, wherein the sequence similarity is at least 40%, preferably at least 60%, more preferably at least 80%, more preferably at least 90%, more preferably at least 95%, most preferably 100%, and specifically bind a specifically disclosed presentil or corresponding parental sequence pen-specific antibody, as measured in one or more of the disclosed interaction assays. The polypeptides comprise, and the similarity or identity extends over at least 10, preferably at least 15, more preferably at least 25, more preferably at least 35, more preferably at least 50 contiguous residues and most preferably over the entire polypeptide and/or parental pen sequence.

Table 1. Parental pen Polypeptides

Parental pen	Natural Source	SEQ ID NO	% identity to human
			parental pen by BLAST
pen-1	C. elegans	(SEQ ID NO:1)	28.7
	D. melanogaster	(SEQ ID NO:2)	45.4
	H. Virescens	(SEQ ID NO:3)	50
	mouse	(SEQ ID NO:4)	92.8
•	human	(SEQ ID NO:5)	100
pen-1B	human	(SEQ ID NO:6)	51(identity to human
			parental pen-1)
pen-2	C. elegans	(SEQ ID NO:7)	42.6
*	D. melanogaster	(SEQ ID NO:8)	60.4
	rat	(SEQ ID NO:9)	96
	mouse	(SEQ ID NO:10)	96
	cow	(SEQ ID NO:11)	95
	human	(SEQ ID NO:12)	100
Aph-2	C. elegans	(SEQ ID NO:13)	18.9
	D. melanogaster	(SEQ ID NO:14)	29.9
	human	(SEQ ID NO:15)	100

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For disclosed polymeric genuses, "percent (%) sequence identity over a specified window size W" with respect to parental sequences is defined as the percentage of residues in any window of W residues in the candidate sequence that are identical with the residues in the parent sequence, after aligning the sequences and introducing gaps, if necessary, to achieve the maximum percent sequence identity. The % identity values are generated by WU-BLAST-2.0 a19 obtained from Altschul et al., J. Mol. Biol., 215: 403-410(1990); http://blast.wustl.edu/blast/README.html. WU-BLAST-2.0a19 which uses several search parameters, all of which are set to the default values. The HSP S and HSP S2 parameters are dynamic values and are established by the program itself depending upon the composition of the particular sequence and composition of the particular database against which the sequence of interest is being searched; however, the values may be adjusted to increase sensitivity. Hence, a % sequence identity value is determined by the number of matching identical residues divided by the window size W for which the percent identity is reported. Exemplary species are readily generated by mutating the corresponding parental sequences and confirming presentiin or antibody binding. For example, pen-1B polypeptides defined by SEQ ID NOS:16-25 exemplify an active (demonstrating presenilin binding) 90% genus around parental sequence SEQ ID NO:6. In particular embodiments, the pen is a natural pen, such as human, mouse, D. melanogaster, H. virescens or C. elegans pen-1; human, rat, mouse, cow, D. melanogaster or C. elegans pen-2; human pen-1B, and human, D. melanogaster or C. elegans Aph-2. In a particular aspect, the pen is a naturally-occurring pen identifiable in a sel- 12Δ (Δ means deletion allele) homozygous C. elegans genetic mutation enhancer screen.

The interaction between the pen and Notch or APP processing may be detected in any convenient manner that specifically assays the pen influence on the processing pathway. The assay may be constructed to monitor a downstream perturbation in product generation (e.g. $A\beta$ or Notch intracellular domain production), an intermediate pathway step (a number of intermediate Notch and APP processing pathway steps and intermediate component interactions are well documented in the art), or initiating pen - presentin or pen - γ -secretase binding.

A wide variety of systems may be used in the methods. Detailed below are animal systems stressed with mutant pen genes to provide sensitized Notch and/or APP processing pathways, which systems are used to characterize additional interacting proteins. In particular embodiments, the system comprises a cell or animal expressing both the pen and a binding target such as a presentilin or γ-secretase, an in vitro, cell-free mixture comprising a determined amount of the pen and a binding target; applications of such cells and mixtures include two-hybrid, biochemical pull-down, immunoprecipitation, fluorescent polarization and solid phase binding assays. In accordance with the diversity of applicable systems, a

wide variety of stresses may be assayed or evaluated, including chemical agents, such as candidate drugs, toxins, contaminants, etc.; radiation such as ultraviolet rays and x-rays; infection such as viral or bacterial infection including cellular transformation; genetic mutations, etc.

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The particular method used to detect the interaction of the pen polypeptide and the presenilin will depend on the nature of the assay, so long as the interaction is specifically detected. For example, as detailed below, modulation of pen mutant specific phenotypes provide readouts for genetic interaction assays. For in vitro assays, depending on if and how the pen polypeptide and/or target are labeled, the interaction readout may be measured by changes in fluorescence, optical density, gel shifts, radiation, etc. In a particular embodiment, the system provides a downstream APP processing readout.

In a particular embodiment, the methods involve specifically detecting a stress that alters a physical interaction of a subject pen polypeptide with APP and/or Notch processing. In one aspect, this embodiment comprises the steps of (a) introducing a predetermined stress into a system which provides a physical interaction of a pen with a binding target, whereby the system provides a stress-biased interaction of the pen and the target, wherein the absence of the stress, the system provides an unbiased interaction of the pen polypeptide and the target; and (b) detecting the stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide and the target, wherein a difference between the stress-biased and unbiased interactions indicates that the stress alters the interaction of the pen polypeptide and the target, wherein preferred targets include γ -secretases, presenilins, notch and/or APP substrates, and/or combinations and complexes thereof.

In the latter embodiment, the presentilin is selected from a presentilin-1 (PS-1) and presentilin-2 (PS-2). These names are used generically to refer to polypeptides which comprise a disclosed parental sequence, comprises specified fragments thereof, or have sequence similarity to the disclosed parental presentilin sequences, wherein the sequence similarity is at least 50%, more preferably at least 70%, more preferably at least 80%, more preferably at least 90%, more preferably at least 95% and most preferably 100%, wherein the presentilin is sufficient to provide a presentilin-specific, detectable functional interaction comparable to that provided by the corresponding parental sequence presentilin, as measured in one or more of the disclosed genetic or biochemical interaction assays. The presentilins comprise, and the similarity or identity extends over at least 10, preferably at least 15, more preferably at least 25, more preferably at least 35, more preferably at least 50 contiguous residues and most preferably over the entire presentilin or parental sequence. The parental presentilin is selected from a natural sequence presentilin 1 (such as human, mouse, chicken

and xenopus sequences) and presenilin 2 (such as human, mouse and xenopus sequences), which are known in the art and accessible from public genetic depositories such as Genbank.

The compositions of the invention, useful in the subject methods, include the subject pen polypeptides and mixtures comprising predetermined amounts of a disclosed pen and presential polypeptides, particularly wherein one, preferably both of these components are isolated and mixtures consisting essentially of both components, i.e. wherein other components of the mixture (except for an assayed stress) do not significantly influence the interaction of these two components. Other aspects of the invention include nucleic acids encoding the disclosed pen polypeptides, antibodies which specifically bind them, and methods of use.

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Subject polypeptides consisting of the disclosed parental sequences or fragments thereof are isolated, i.e. encompass pen polypeptides covalently joined to a non-natural or heterologous component, such as a non-natural amino acid or amino acid sequence or a natural amino acid or sequence other than that which the polypeptide is joined to in a natural protein, are preferably in solution, and preferably constitute at least about 0.5%, and more preferably at least about 5% by weight of the total polypeptide in a given sample and pure polypeptides constitute at least about 90%, and preferably at least about 99% by weight of the total polypeptide in a given sample, as are preferred subject polypeptides comprising other than parental sequence. The polypeptides may be covalently or noncovalently part of a larger complex, such as larger polypeptides and/or various conjugates, etc. The polypeptides may be synthesized, produced by recombinant technology, or purified from mammalian, preferably human cells. A wide variety of molecular and biochemical methods are available for biochemical synthesis, molecular expression and purification of the subject compositions, see e.g. Molecular Cloning, A Laboratory Manual (Sambrook, et al. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory), Current Protocols in Molecular Biology (Eds. Ausubel, et al., Greene Publ. Assoc., Wiley-Interscience, NY) or that are otherwise known in the art.

The pen encompassing fragments comprise at least 10, preferably at least 15, more preferably at least 25, more preferably at least 35, most preferably at least 50 consecutive residues of a corresponding disclosed parental pen sequence. Pen polypeptides provide corresponding pen specific function, such as interacting with a component of a natural notch or APP processing pathway, especially presentlin binding or binding inhibitory activity as shown in one or more binding assays as described herein, and/or pen specific antibody binding or binding inhibitory activity, particularly as measured in a disclosed binding assay.

Pen-specific function may be determined by convenient in vitro, cell-based, or in vivo assays, e.g. binding assays. The term binding assay is used generically to encompass any assay, including in vitro, cell-cuture or animal-based assays (e.g. using gene therapy

techniques or with transgenics), etc. where the molecular interaction of a pen polypeptide with a specific binding target is evaluated. The binding target may be a natural intracellular binding target such as a presenilin, a pen regulating protein or other regulator that directly modulates pen activity or its localization; or non-natural binding target such as a specific immune protein such as an antibody, or a pen specific agent such as those identified in screening assays such as described below. Pen-binding specificity may be assayed by APP processing (e.g. ability of the subject polypeptides to function as negative effectors in penexpressing cells), by binding equilibrium constants (usually at least about $10^7 \, \mathrm{M}^{-1}$, preferably at least about $10^8 \, \mathrm{M}^{-1}$, more preferably at least about $10^9 \, \mathrm{M}^{-1}$), by immunogenicity (e.g. ability to elicit pen specific antibody in a heterologous host such as a mouse, rat, goat or rabbit), etc.

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In a particular embodiment, the subject polypeptides provide pen-specific antigens and/or immunogens, especially when coupled to carrier proteins. For example, the subject polypeptides are covalently coupled to keyhole limpet antigen (KLH) and the conjugate is emulsified in Freunds complete adjuvant. Laboratory rabbits are immunized according to conventional protocol and bled. The presence of pen-specific antibodies is assayed by solid phase immunosorbant assays using immobilized corresponding pen polypeptides, see, e.g. Table 2.

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Table 2. Immunogenic pen-1B polypeptides eliciting pen-1B-specific rabbit polyclonal antibody: pen-1B polypeptide-KLH conjugates immunized per protocol described above.

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pen-1B	<u>Immuno-</u>	pen-1B	Immuno-
Polypeptide Sequence	genicity	Polypeptide Sequence	genicity
SEQ ID NO:6, res 1-14	+++	SEQ ID NO:6, res 115-126	+++
SEQ ID NO:6, res 6-15	+++	SEQ ID NO:6, res 130-140	+++ .
SEQ ID NO:6, res 10-20	+++	SEQ ID NO:6, res 139-151	+++
SEQ ID NO:6, res 25-46	1-++	SEQ ID NO:6, res 166-182	1-1-1
SEQ ID NO:6, res 62-71	+++	SEQ ID NO:6, res 184-198	1++
SEQ ID NO:6, res 67-76	-+++	SEQ ID NO:6, res 214-232	+++
SEQ ID NO:6, res 72-95	+++	SEQ ID NO:6, res 246-257	+++

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The subject pen polypeptides also encompass minor deletion mutants, including N-, and/or C-terminal truncations, of the parental pen polypeptides. Such deletion mutants are readily screened for pen competitive or dominant negative activity. Exemplary active

deletion mutants for pen-1B include polypeptides comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NO:6, residues 1-254; SEQ ID NO:6, residues 4-255; SEQ ID NO:6, residues 9-257; and SEQ ID NO:6, residues 2-255.

The invention provides binding agents specific to the claimed pen-1B polypeptides, including natural intracellular binding targets, etc., methods of identifying and making such agents, and their use in diagnosis, therapy and pharmaceutical development. For example, specific binding agents are useful in a variety of diagnostic and therapeutic applications, especially where disease or disease prognosis is associated with unoptimized utilization of a pathway involving pen, e.g. APP processing. Novel pen-specific binding agents include penspecific receptors, such as somatically recombined polypeptide receptors like specific antibodies or T-cell antigen receptors (see, e.g Harlow and Lane (1988) Antibodies, A Laboratory Manual, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory) and other natural intracellular binding agents identified with assays such as one-, two- and three-hybrid screens, non-natural intracellular binding agents identified in screens of chemical libraries such as in vitro, cellbased and animal-based binding assays described herein, or otherwise known to those of skill in the art, etc. Agents of particular interest modulate pen function, e.g. pen-dependent Notch or APP processing, and include dominant negative deletion mutants, etc. Accordingly, the invention also provides methods for modulating APP processing in a cell comprising the step of modulating pen activity, e.g. by contacting the cell with a modulator of a resident pen, a dominant negative pen deletion mutant, or pen polynucleotide (below).

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In addition to direct synthesis, the subject polypeptides can also be expressed in cell and cell-free systems (e.g. Jermutus L, et al., Curr Opin Biotechnol. 1998 Oct;9(5):534-48) from encoding polynucleotides, such as the corresponding parent polynucleotides or naturally-encoding polynucleotides isolated with degenerate oligonucleotide primers and probes generated from the subject polypeptide sequences ("GCG" software, Genetics Computer Group, Inc, Madison WI) or polynucleotides optimized for selected expression systems made by back-translating the subject polypeptides according to computer algorithms (e.g. Holler et al. (1993) Gene 136, 323-328; Martin et al. (1995) Gene 154, 150-166). Hence, the polypeptides may be synthesized, produced by recombinant technology, or purified from cells. A wide variety of molecular and biochemical methods are available for biochemical synthesis, molecular expression and purification of the subject compositions, see e.g. Molecular Cloning, A Laboratory Manual (Sambrook, et al. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory), Current Protocols in Molecular Biology (Eds. Ausubel, et al., Greene Publ. Assoc., Wiley-Interscience, NY) or that are otherwise known in the art.

The invention provides polynucleotides encoding the disclosed polypeptides, and pengene specific polynucleotides, which polynucleotides may be joined to other components

such as labels or other polynucleotide sequences (i.e. they may be part of larger sequences) and are of synthetic/non-natural sequences and/or are isolated, i.e. unaccompanied by at least some of the material with which it is associated in its natural state, preferably constituting at least about 0.5%, preferably at least about 5% by weight of total nucleic acid present in a given fraction, and usually recombinant, meaning they comprise a non-natural sequence or a natural sequence joined to nucleotide(s) other than that which it is joined to on a natural chromosome. Recombinant polynucleotides comprising natural sequence contain such sequence at a terminus, immediately flanked by (i.e. contiguous with) a sequence other than that which it is joined to on a natural chromosome, or flanked by a native flanking region fewer than 10 kb, preferably fewer than 2 kb, more preferably fewer than 500 bases, most preferably fewer than 100 bases, which is at a terminus or is immediately flanked by a sequence other than that which it is joined to on a natural chromosome. While the polynucleotides are usually RNA or DNA, it is often advantageous to use polynucleotides comprising other bases or nucleotide analogs to provide modified stability, etc. Futhermore, the terms polynucleotide and nucleic acid are used interchangeably to refer to any polymer of nucleotides, without restriction by length.

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The invention also encompasses pen, particularly pen-1B gene specific polynucleotides. For example, the nucleotide sequence of a natural human transcript encoding a natural human pen-1B polypeptide is shown as SEQ ID NO:26. The term pen-1B gene specific polynucleotides is used generically to refer to polynucleotides comprising SEQ ID NO:26, comprising specified fragments of SEQ ID NO:26, or having sequence similarity to SEQ ID NO:26. Subject fragments of SEQ ID NO:26, which are useful, e.g. as. hybridization probes and replication / amplification primers, comprise at least 12, preferably at least 24, more preferably at least 48, more preferably at least 96 and most preferably at least 182 contiguous nucleotides of SEQ ID NO:26.

Pen gene specific polynucleotides effect specific hybridization to the corresponding parental sequence or complement thereof; for example, all pen-1B gene specific polynucleotides effect specific hybridization to SEQ ID NO:26 or its complement. Demonstrating specific hybridization generally requires stringent conditions, for example, hybridizing in a buffer comprising 30% formamide in 5 x SSPE (0.18 M NaCl, 0.01 M NaPO₄, pH 7.7, 0.001 M EDTA) buffer at a temperature of 42°C and remaining bound when subject to washing at 42°C with 0.2 x SSPE; preferably hybridizing in a buffer comprising 50% formamide in 5 x SSPE buffer at a temperature of 42°C and remaining bound when subject to washing at 42°C with 0.2 x SSPE buffer at 42°C. Specifically hybridizing polynucleotides are readily identified in convenient gel-based assays; for example, polynucleotides comprising SEQ ID NOS:27-38 are shown to specifically hybridize with SEQ ID NO:26 under the foregoing preferred hybridization conditions.

Table 3. Exemplary pen-1B gene specific polynucleotides which hybridize with a strand of SEQ ID NO:26 under Conditions I and II.

	pen-1B gene specific	Specific	pen-1B gene specific	Specific
	polynucleotides	<u>Hybrids</u>	polynucleotides	<u>Hybrids</u>
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 1-36	+	SEQ ID NO:27	+
5	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 32-68	+	SEQ ID NO:28	+
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 65-97	+	SEQ ID NO:28	+
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 103-140	+	SEQ ID NO:30	+, ,
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 131-154	+	SEQ ID NO:31	+
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 148-182	+	SEQ ID NO:32	+
10.	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 222-256	+	SEQ ID NO:33	+
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 258-286	+	SEQ ID NO:34	+
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 273-305	+	SEQ ID NO:35	+
•	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 318-352	+	SEQ ID NO:36	+
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 344-376	+	SEQ ID NO:37	+
15	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 352-386	+	SEQ ID NO:38	+
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 388-424	+		
	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 406-431	+	,	
•	SEQ ID NO:26, nucl 420-446	+		7

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The subject nucleic acids find a wide variety of applications including use as translatable transcripts, hybridization probes, PCR primers, diagnostic nucleic acids, etc.; use in detecting the presence of other pen gene specific polynucleotides and gene transcripts and in detecting or amplifying nucleic acids encoding additional pen homologs and structural analogs. For example, pen-encoding polynucleotides may be used in pen-expression vectors, generally operably linked to a heterologous promoter, and/or incorporated into recombinant host cells, e.g. for expression and screening, transgenic animals, e.g. for functional studies such as the efficacy of candidate drugs for disease associated with pen-modulated cell function, etc. In diagnosis, pen hybridization probes find use in identifying wild-type and mutant pen alleles in clinical and laboratory samples. Mutant alleles are used to generate allele-specific probes for high-throughput clinical diagnoses, e.g. for pen mutations associated

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with Alzheimer's disease. In therapy, therapeutic pen polynucleotides are used to modulate cellular expression or intracellular concentration or availability of active pen.

For example, pen polynucleotides are used to modulate cellular expression or intracellular concentration or availability of active pen protein. Pen inhibitory nucleic acids are typically antisense: single-stranded sequences comprising complements of the disclosed natural pen transcript sequence. Antisense modulation of the expression of a given pen polypeptide may employ antisense nucleic acids operably linked to gene regulatory sequences. Cells are transfected with a vector comprising a pen gene specific polynucleotide sequence with a promoter sequence oriented such that transcription of the gene yields an antisense transcript capable of binding to endogenous pen encoding mRNA. Alternatively, single-stranded antisense polynucleotides that bind to genomic DNA or mRNA encoding pen polypeptide may be administered to the target cell, in or temporarily isolated from a host, at a concentration that results in a substantial reduction in expression of the targeted protein. An enhancement in pen expression is effected by introducing into the targeted cell type pen polynucleotides that increase the functional expression of the corresponding gene products. Such polynucleotides may be pen expression vectors, vectors that upregulate the functional expression of an endogenous allele, or replacement vectors for targeted modification of endogenous mutant or wild type alleles. Techniques for introducing the nucleic acids into viable cells are known in the art and include retroviral-based transfection, viral coat protein-liposome mediated transfection, etc.

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The invention provides efficient methods of identifying agents, compounds or lead compounds for agents active at the level of a pen modulatable cellular function and/or pen gene expression, including transcription. A wide variety of assays for transcriptional modulators or binding agents is provided including labeled *in vitro* ligand binding assays, immunoassays, etc. The methods are amenable to automated, cost-effective high throughput screening of chemical libraries for lead compounds. Identified reagents find use in the pharmaceutical industries for animal and human trials; for example, the reagents may be derivatized and rescreened in *in vitro* and *in vivo* assays to optimize activity and minimize toxicity for pharmaceutical development.

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A wide variety of assays for binding agents, i.e. screens for compounds that modulate pen interaction with a natural pen binding target are also provided. These assays employ a mixture of components including a pen polypeptide, which may be part of a fusion product with another polypeptide, e.g. a peptide tag for detection or anchoring, etc. The assay mixtures comprise a natural intracellular pen binding target. In a particular embodiment, the binding target is presenilin, or portion thereof which provides binding affinity and avidity to the subject pen polypeptide conveniently measurable in the assay and preferably comparable

to the intact presenilin. The assay mixture also comprises a candidate pharmacological agent. Candidate agents encompass numerous chemical classes, though typically they are organic compounds; preferably small organic compounds and are obtained from a wide variety of sources including libraries of synthetic or natural compounds. A variety of other reagents may also be included in the mixture. These include reagents like salts, buffers, neutral proteins, e.g. albumin, detergents, protease inhibitors, nuclease inhibitors, antimicrobial agents, etc.

The resultant mixture is incubated under conditions whereby, but for the presence of the candidate pharmacological agent, the pen polypeptide specifically binds the cellular binding target, portion or analog with a reference binding affinity. The mixture components can be added in any order that provides for the requisite bindings, and incubations may be performed at any temperature which facilitates optimal binding. Incubation periods are likewise selected for optimal binding but also minimized to facilitate rapid, high-throughput screening.

After incubation, the agent-biased binding between the pen polypeptide and one or more binding targets is detected by any convenient way. A variety of methods may be used to detect the change depending on the nature of the product and other assay components, e.g. through optical or electron density, radiative emissions, nonradiative energy transfers, etc. or indirect detection with antibody conjugates, etc. A difference in the binding affinity of the pen-1B to the target in the absence of the agent as compared with the binding affinity in the presence of the agent indicates that the agent modulates the binding of the pen to the pen binding target. A difference, as used herein, is statistically significant and preferably represents at least a 50%, more preferably at least a 90% difference.

The following experimental section and examples are offered by way of illustration and not by way of limitation.

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EXAMPLES, PROTOCOLS AND EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

I. <u>High-Throughput In Vitro Fluorescence Polarization Assay</u>

Reagents:

pen peptide (size minimized, rhodamine-labeled; final conc. = 1 - 5 nM)

PS polypeptide (final conc. = 100 - 200 nM)

Buffer: 10 mM HEPES, 10 mM NaCl, 6 mM magnesium chloride, pH 7.6 Protocol:

1. Add 90 microliters of pen peptide/PS polypeptide mixture to each well of a 96-well microtiter plate.

- 2. Add 10 microliters of test compound per well.
- 3. Shake 5 min and within 5 minutes determine amount of fluorescence polarization by using a Fluorolite FPM-2 Fluorescence Polarization Microtiter System (Dynatech Laboratories, Inc).

II. Conformational Sensor - ELISA Format Assay

Buffer and Solution Preparation:

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1. 10X Assay Buffer:

100mL of 1M Hepes

300mL of 5M NaCl

20mL of 1M MgCl

Add MQ H2O to 1L

2. Master Mix of peptide / protein

Protein: Glutathione-S-transferase/ γ-secretase polypeptide fusion protein:

final conc = 100 nM

pen peptide (size minimized, biotinylated; final conc. = 1 uM)

Add Assay Buffer and H2O to bring to final volume: final buffer conc = 1X

3. Antibody Mix:

anti-GST, rabbit (final conc. = 1:10,000)

anti-rabbit-HRP (final conc. = 1:10,000)

Add T-TBS to bring to final volume: final buffer conc = 1X

Procedure:

- 1. Make 50 mL of Master Mix (see 2 above) of appropriate peptide / protein combinations (use 50 mL polypropylene tubes). Incubate for 1 hr at RT
- 2. Add 95 uL of Master Mix to each well of a 96-well plate**
 - ** Reacti-Bind Streptavidin-Coated, White Polystyrene Plates (#15118B), which have been blocked by Super-Blocking Reagent from Pierce.
- 3. Transfer 5 uL of each test compound (stock = 60 uM) to each well of the plate
- 30 4. Incubate plate for 1hr at RT

- 5. While incubating, make rabbit anti-GST antibody and anti-rabbit-HRP Antibody Mix (see 3 above). Incubate on ice for 1 hr.
- 6. Wash plates 3X with H2O thoroughly
- 7. Add 100 uL of Antibody Mix into each well of the plate
- 8. Incubate for 1 hr at RT
- 9. Wash 3X with H2O
 - Dilute Supersignal substrate (mixed Luminol and peroxide) in 1:2 H2O and then add 100 uL into each well
 - 11. Shake 3-5 min. Read chemiluminescence.

10 III. High-Throughput In Vitro Binding Assay.

A. Reagents:

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- Neutralite Avidin: 20 µg/ml in PBS.
- Blocking buffer: 5% BSA, 0.5% Tween 20 in PBS; 1 hour at room temperature.
- Assay Buffer: 100 mM KCl, 20 mM HEPES pH 7.6, 1 mM MgCl₂, 1% glycerol, 0.5% NP-40, 50 mM b-mercaptoethanol, 1 mg/ml BSA, cocktail of protease inhibitors.
 - ³³P pen peptide 10x stock: 10-8 10-6 M "cold" pen peptide supplemented with 200,000-250,000 cpm of labeled pen peptide (Beckman counter). Place in the 4°C microfridge during screening.
- Protease inhibitor cocktail (1000X): 10 mg Trypsin Inhibitor (BMB # 109894), 10 mg Aprotinin (BMB # 236624), 25 mg Benzamidine (Sigma # B-6506), 25 mg Leupeptin (BMB # 1017128), 10 mg APMSF (BMB # 917575), and 2mM NaVO₃ (Sigma # S-6508) in 10 ml of PBS.
 - -Binding Polypeptide: 10^{-7} 10^{-5} M biotinylated PS polypeptide in PBS.
 - B. Preparation of assay plates:
 - Coat with 120 μl of stock N-Avidin per well overnight at 4°C.
 - Wash 2 times with 200 µl PBS.
 - Block with 150 µl of blocking buffer.
 - Wash 2 times with 200 µl PBS.
 - C. Assay:
- 30 Add 40 μl assay buffer/well.

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- Add 10 µl compound or extract.
- Add 10 μl ^{33}P -pen peptide (20-25,000 cpm/0.1-10 pmoles/well =10-9- 10^{-7} M final conc).
 - Shake at 25°C for 15 minutes.
 - Incubate additional 45 minutes at 25°C.
 - Add 40 µM biotinylated PS polypeptide (0.1-10 pmoles/40 ul in assay buffer)
 - Incubate 1 hour at room temperature.
 - Stop the reaction by washing 4 times with 200 µM PBS.
 - Add 150 µM scintillation cocktail.
 - Count in Topcount.
- 10 D. Controls for all assays (located on each plate):
 - a. Non-specific binding
 - b. Soluble (non-biotinylated PS polypeptide) at 80% inhibition.

IV. Identification of presenilin enhancer genes: natural pen-1 and pen-2.

The partial redundancy of sel-12 and hop-1 means that, for most tissues, a deletion of one or the other gene will result in only a partial loss of presenilin function. Hence, a knock-out mutation in one or the other gene provides a sensitized background for genetic screens designed to identify presenilin interacting genes. Using this reasoning, we designed several variations of genetic screens aimed at identifying genes that act in concert with presenilins. One variation (Screen A) is to mutagenize worms homozygous for a sel-12 deletion mutation (hereinafter referred to as sel-12Δ) and screen for enhancer mutations that, in combination with sel-12Δ, produce phenotypes equivalent to those of the sel-12Δ; hop-1Δ double mutant. Such enhancer mutations identify both 1) components that interact uniquely with hop-1 presenilin and 2) components that interact with both hop-1 and sel-12 presenilins. As an internal control, Screen A is expected to yield loss-of-function hop-1 alleles since the screen targets the phenotypes seen in the sel-12Δ; hop-1Δ double mutant. Another variation is to mutagenize a hop-1 single mutant and again screen for enhancement to the phenotypes associated with a complete presenilin.

In addition to the desired mutations that enhance presentlin defects, these screens identify mutations in known components of the glp-1 signaling pathway (e.g., glp-1/Notch receptor, lag-2/DSL ligand, lag-2/Su(H) family effector) since loss of these gene products results in glp-1 like sterility. An important distinction between presentlin enhancers and

mutations in known glp-1 pathway genes is that former result in glp-1-like sterility only in a sel- 12Δ background whereas the latter result in glp-1 sterility in both a wild-type genetic background (Austin, J. and Kimble, J., Cell (1987) 51:589-599; Lambie, E. and Kimble, J., Development 1991) 112:231-240) and a sel-12Δ background.

We performed Screen A on a large scale, screening approximately 128,000 haploid genomes after mutagenesis of a sel-12 Δ homozygous strain with ethyl methane sulfonate. The screen resulted in the isolation of the expected types of mutants, including 27 putative glp-1 alleles, 3 mutations identified as likely lag-1 or lag-2 alleles based on map position, and 8 hop-1 mutations. As expected, the putative glp-1, lag-1, and lag-2 mutations result in glp-1-like sterility in both a wild type and a sel-12 Δ genetic background; these mutations therefore cause sterility independently of the presence or absence sel-12+ function. By contrast, the 8 hop-1 mutations result in a penetrant glp-1-like sterile phenotype in the absence, but not the presence, of sel-12+ activity.

In addition to the preceding, we isolated 7 mutants that, based on mapping and complementation tests, identify two new presenilin-interacting genes. Four of these mutants identify the gene pen-1 located on chromosome I and other three identify the gene pen-2 located on chromosome III. Our subsequent work with these genes indicated: 1) that the pen-1 and pen-2 enhancers alleles are loss-of-function mutations; 2) that loss of pen-1+ or pen-2+ function, in combination with a loss of sel-12+ function, has the same phenotypic consequences as a complete loss of presenilin function; 3) that loss of pen-1+ and pen-2+ function in a sel-12+ background results in phenotypes indicative of a partial loss of presenilin/Notch pathway function; 4) that pen-1 and pen-2 interact genetically with both sel-12 and hop-1; 5) that the open reading frames for pen-1 and pen-2 encode unrelated integral membrane proteins; 6) that pen-1 and pen-2 related genes are conserved across phyla.

Pen-1 and pen-2 mutations enhance sel- 12Δ to the lin-12/glp-1-like phenotypes associated with total presentilin loss. As double mutants with a sel- 12Δ mutation, pen-1 alleles and pen-2 alleles each result in a set of phenotypes identical with those seen in sel- 12Δ ; hop- 1Δ worms that receive no maternal sel-12+ activity. Specifically, each of these double mutants with sel- 12Δ share 3 common abnormalities that are not seen in sel- 12Δ or hop- 1Δ single mutants, or in pen-1 or pen-2 single mutants. First, all three sets of double mutants display indistinguishable glp-1-like sterile phenotypes characterized by germ cell proliferation defect similar to that described for glp-1 loss-of-function mutants (Austin and Kimble, 1987). Second, all three double mutants show a common cell fate specification defect(s) that indicates a loss of lin-12/Notch signaling. lin-12+ activity is required for the ventral uterine precursor versus anchor cell fate decision: lin-12(lf) mutants have 2 anchor cells rather than the normal complement of one because the cell that normally adopts the

ventral uterine precursor fate instead becomes an anchor cell (Greenwald, I. et al., Cell (1983) 34:435-444). The sel-12Δ; pen-1 and sel-12Δ; pen-2 double mutants display this "2 anchor cell" phenotype just as does the sel-1Δ2; hop-1Δ double mutant (Westlund, B et al., Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. (1999) 96: 2497-2502). Third, sel-12Δ; pen-1 and sel-12Δ; pen-2 double mutants, like sel-12Δ; hop-1Δ, display an everted vulva phenotype that is reminiscent of vulva defects seen in lin-12(lf) mutants.

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The above phenotypic comparisons demonstrate that a reduction in pen-1+ or pen-2+ activity, in combination with a loss of sel-12+ activity, results in a loss of presentilin pathway function comparable to the effects of eliminating the two redundant presentilins encoded by sel-12 and hop-1.

Single pen-1 and pen-2 mutations confer phenotypes associated with partial loss of presentilin function. As single mutants, pen-1 and pen-2 worms display two visible abnormalities. First, pen-1 and pen-2 homozygotes (produced from a pen-1/+ or pen-2/+ mother) both produce normal numbers of self-progeny embryos but these embryos are retained in the animal's uterus and never laid. pen-1 and pen-2 hermaphrodites are thus egg-laying defective (or Egl), a phenotype shared by the sel-12Δ single mutant.

Second, the embryos produced by homozygous pen-1 or pen-2 hermaphrodites never hatch but instead arrest in development with multiple abnormalities. The arrested embryos produced by pen-1 and pen-2 hermaphrodites show very similar abnormalities. Most strikingly, many of the arrested embryos make only a partial pharynx: the posterior pharnygeal lobe is present, but the anterior lobe is absent. Absence of anterior pharynx, called an Aph phenotype (for no anterior pharynx), was first described for certain weak alleles of glp-1. The GLP-1 receptor is required for a specific embryonic signaling event that induces formation of anterior pharynx (Mello, C. et al., Cell (1994) 77: 95-106; Moscovitz, I et al., Development (1994) 120:3325-3338; Hutter, H. and Schnabel, R., Development (1994) 120:2051-2064); absence of maternally provided glp-1+ activity can thus result in the Aph phenotype as well as other defects (Priess, J. et al., Cell (1987) 5:601-611). A connection of the Aph phenotype with reduced presenilin function comes from analysis of sel-12Δ; hop-1Δ hermaphrodites which receive maternal sel-12+ (which rescues the sterility seen in the absence of maternal sel-12+ function). In this situation, sel-12 Δ ; hop-1 Δ hermaphrodites produce arrested embryos which display the Aph phenotype, as well addition to other glp-1like embryonic defects (Westlund, B., supra). These properties of pen-1 and pen-2 indicate both genes act in concert with both sel-12 and hop-1 presenilins, since the loss of pen-1 or pen-2 causes phenotypes more severe than those cause by the sel-12 or hop-1 single mutant.

In addition to the Aph phenotype, embryos produced by homozygous pen-1 or pen-2 hermaphrodites display other abnormalities. The embryos usually arrest with little evidence of elongation and the embryonic hypodermis (layer of epidermal cells that lies under and secrets the cuticle) often fails to fully enclose other cell types. Similar phenotypes have been described for embryos produced by glp-1(ts) mutants.

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In summary, pen-1 and pen-2 mutants share multiple phenotypes (Egl, Aph and defective embryonic elongation) that are indicative of cell signaling defects involving the Notch family receptors glp-1 and lin-12. In addition, in combination with sel-12Δ, pen-1 and pen-2 result in additional, stronger Notch pathway-related defects (glp-1-like sterility, 2 anchor cell phenotype; vulva eversion). The combined genetic and phenotypic evidence indicates that pen-1 and pen-2 are novel components that may assist presenilins in Notch receptor maturation and/or processing.

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Pen-1 corresponds to the predicted C. elegans gene VF36H2L.1. To clone pen-1, we genetically mapped pen-1(ep140) to increasingly smaller intervals, first using visible genetic markers and then using molecular markers [Tc1 transposon insertions and single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs)]. The final stage of SNP mapping of pen-1 narrowed its position to a 52 KB interval on chromosome I. This interval, as documented in the C. elegans database ACEDB (Eeckman, F. and Durbin, R. C. elegans: Modern Biological Analysis of an Organism (1995) pp. 583-599), contains a total of 7 predicted genes. One of these, VF36H2L.1, was identified as pen-1 on the basis of RNA-mediated interference (RNAi) data and mutation detection. For many C. elegans genes, RNAi disrupts both maternal and zygotic gene activity (Tabara, H. et al. Science (1998) 282:430-431). In case of pen-1, disruption of maternal activity after injection of dsRNA into adult hermaphrodites was evidenced by the production of developmentally arrested embryos with an Aph phenotype. As expected, this phenotype was observed after RNAi of both wild-type and sel- 12A hermaphrodites. RNAi in either background also gave many viable escaper progeny that grew to adulthood. In the case of RNAi in a sel-12\Delta background, a high proportion of these escapers displayed glp-1-like sterility, consistent with inhibition of zygotic pen-1 activity. Unexpectedly, RNAi of VF36H2L.1 in wild type also resulted in Glp sterile progeny, although at a much lower frequency than in with pen-1 RNAi in a sel-12Δ homozygotes. By contrast, glp-1-like sterility is never observed in pen-1 single mutants. This difference is most likely attributable to the property that RNAi typically disrupts both maternal and zygotic gene function, and can therefore result in more severe phenotypes than seen in zygotically lethal mutations.

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By sequence analysis, we determined that the four pen-1 alleles isolated as sel-12 enhancers each contain single-nucleotide substitutions in the VF36H2L.1 open reading frame.

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Remarkably, these 4 independently-derived lesions are each nonsense mutations in the same codon, Trp191. Three alleles (ep140, ep168, and ep170) are third base UGG to UGA alterations, while the fourth (ep216) is a second base UAG to UGG change. That these lesions result in Aph and glp-1 like sterility phenotypes similar to RNAi of VF36H2L.1, indicates that they are reduction-of- function mutations.

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Pen-1 encodes an evolutionarily conserved protein with multiple transmembrane domains. The pen-1 (VF36H2L.1, GI#2815036) open reading frame is split among 4 exons that, when spliced, encode a 308 amino-acid protein. We confirmed the predicted splice junctions of exons 2 and 3 by sequence analysis of partial cDNA product. Pen-1 shows homology with the predicted structures of various human, mouse, and Drosophila proteins, as described in detail below. Pen-1 is a predicted integral membrane protein that, as determined by the structure predicting programs PSORT2 and TopPred2, may contain up to 7 membrane-spanning domains.

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Pen-2 corresponds to predicted C. elegans gene T28D6.9. We genetically mapped pen-2 to chromosome III between the cloned genes pha-1 and dpy-18. This interval spans approximately 240 KB of DNA and contains 31 predicted genes as documented in ACEDB ver. 9 (Eeckman, F. and Durbin, R., C. elegans: Modern Biological Analysis of an Organism (1995) pp. 583-599). pen-2 was identified as the predicted gene T28D6.9 on the basis of RNAi data and mutation detection. RNAi of most of the genes in the interval led to the identification of, T28D6.9, as the only candidate gene for which RNAi gave the expected maternal and zygotic pen-2 phenotypes. Wild type and sel- 12\Delta hermaphrodites injected with T28D6.9 produced a high proportion of developmentally-arrested embryos, many of which were Aph. In addition, RNAi of sel-12Δ (but not wild type) worms resulted in viable "escaper" progeny that displayed glp-1 like sterility. Mutation detection for the three pen-2 alleles isolated as sel-12 enhancers revealed that each contains a nonsense mutation in the T28D6.9 predicted open reading frame. Two lesions (ep219 and ep220) alter the Trp74 codon, changing it from UGG to UGA (ep219) or UAG (ep220), while the third lesion (ep221) changes Trp36 to a UGA stop codon. These nonsense alleles should strongly reduce or abolish gene function, indicating that enhancement of sel-12\Delta results from a loss of wild-type pen-2+ activity.

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Pen-2 encodes a predicted multi-pass membrane protein. The pen-2 (T28D6.9, GI#3873415) open reading frame encodes a 101 amino acid protein. The predicted exon/intron structure of pen-2 has been confirmed by the sequence of an unpublished full-length cDNA (yk569h5 GI# 5572325 and 5558557) present in Genbank. Pen-2 shows a high level of homology with the predicted structures of various human, mouse, rat, and Drosophila proteins, as described in detail below. Pen-2 is a predicted integral membrane

protein that, as determined by the structure predicting programs PSORT2 and TopPred2, contains 2 likely transmembrane domains.

Based on several properties, including their own specific phenotypes and their interactions with sel-12, pen-1 and pen-2 likely encode products that interact with presenilins. By extension, other genes with properties in common with pen-1, pen-2, sel-12, or hop-1 can be considered as potential presenilin interacting genes. We have identified the aph-2 gene as a presenilin interacting gene based on 1) the specific phenotypes associated with a loss of aph-2+ function and 2) our identification of novel genetic interactions of aph-2 and with sel-12 and hop-1, and with pen-1 and pen-2.

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The aph-2 gene was identified by C. Goutte et al. (1995 International Worm Meeting, abstract 39; 1998 East Coast Worm Meeting, abstract 151; Worm Breeder's Gazette 12(5):27 (1993); Worm Breeder Gazette 13(d):83 (1994)) as a possible component of glp-1 mediated signaling in C. elegans embryos. The aph-2 mutants characterized by these investigators have no reported zygotic phenotypes, but do have maternal embryonic defects, including an Aph phenotype, strikingly similar to glp-1(ts) embryonic defects. aph-2 reportedly corresponds to the predicted gene ZC434.6. The predicted aph-2 protein is a 721 amino acids in length and is characterized by a signal sequence and 1 to 3 transmembrane domains as predicted by PSORT2 (Nakai K., and Horton P., Trends Biochem Sci, 1999, 24:34-6) and TopPred2 (Claros MG, and von Heijne G. Comput Appl Biosci 1994 Dec;10(6):685-6).

The screen that identified pen-1 and pen-2 did not yield mutations in aph-2. In order to identify potential presenilin/ aph-2 interactions that may have been missed due to the high stringency of this screen, we investigated a variety of genetic backgrounds that are more highly sensitized for presenilin loss. For these experiments, due to the lack of an available aph-2 mutations, we used RNAi to reduce aph-2+ function in selected backgrounds. Injection of aph-2 dsRNA into the germ line of wild type hermaphrodites results in highly penetrant embryonic lethality among the progeny, with many of the arrested embryos displaying an Aph phenotype. However, injected hermaphrodites still produce a substantial fraction of viable progeny that grow to adulthood with no phenotypic abnormalities in somatic tissues. These worms can be considered "transient escapers" because many of them produce developmentally-arrested Aph embryos. We were thus able to inject adult hermaphrodites with aph-2 RNA and examine their transient escaper progeny for presenilin-dependent phenotypes. Table 4 summarizes the results of these experiments.

Table 4 Enhancement of presentilin and pen gene phenotypes by aph-2 RNAi (transgene escaper progeny phenotypes).

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Genotype1	Zygotic Phenotypes	Zygotic phenotypes after
	(no aph-2 RNAi)	aph-2 RNAi 2
wild type	wild-type	wild-type
sel-12Δ	Egg-laying defective	Egg-laying defective
sel-12\Delta, hop-1(ep168)/+	Egg-laying defective	glp-1 like sterility (12%)
hop-1(ep171)3	Low penetrance glp-1 like sterility (<1%)	glp-1 like sterility (>50%)
pen-1(ep140)	Egg-laying defective	glp-1 like sterility (>50%)
pen-2(ep220)	Egg-laying defective	glp-1 like sterility (>50%

1 Complete genotypes of XX hermaphrodites were as follows: Row 1: N2 (wild-type). Row 2:

sel-12(ep6). Row 3: sel-12(ep6); hop-1(ep168) unc-74(x19)/ hT2 [hop-1+ unc-74+]. Row 4: hop-1(ep171) unc-74(x19). Row 5: unc-29(e1072) pen-1(ep140) Row 6: pen-2(ep220) dpy-18(e364).

2 Hermaphrodites from homozygous or heterozygous stocks were injected with aph-2 dsRNA.

All genotypes segregated developmentally-arrested Aph-2 embryos, as well as some viable escaper progeny. For genotypes where aph-2(RNAi) resulted in a zygotic Glp-1-like sterility among the escaper progeny, the approximate fraction of Glp sterile worms is indicated.

Aph-2 RNAi in a homozygous sel-12Δ background does not obviously enhance sel-12 to more severe presentlin phenotypes. However, significant enhancement is detected in homozygous sel-12Δ worms that are also heterozygous for a hop-1 nonsense mutant (hop-1(ep168)/+). With aph-2 RNAi, about 12% of sel-12Δ; hop-1(ep168)/+ animals display glp-1-like sterility, something never seen for this genotype in the absence of aph-2 RNAi. Further, the aph-2 RNAi enhancement is dependent on combined reduction in both presentlins as no interaction is seen with the sel-12Δ.

An additional interaction with aph-2 is observed with an unusual hop-1 allele, ep171. This allele carries a D to N missense alteration in an conserved aspartate residue that

corresponds to the Asp385 residue (located in TM domain 8) of human PS1. A PS1 Asp285Ala mutation results in loss of PS1 function, and also has dominant negative effects on PS1+ expression (Wolfe, M. Nature (1999) 398: 513-517) Like the PS1 D385A alteration, hop-1(ep171) has no wild type presenilin activity: the sel-12Δ; hop-1(ep171) double mutant has a glp-1-like sterility defect similar to sel-12Δ; hop-1Δ. In a sel-12+ background, hop-1(ep171) results in a very low penetrance (<1%) glp-1-like sterility phenotype, which suggests it must have dominant negative effects on sel-12 presentilin function or expression. We found that RNAi of aph-2 in homozygous hop-1(ep171) hermaphrodites results in highly penetrant glp-1-like sterility (>50% of viable progeny), indicating a strong additive interaction between reduced aph-2+ function and the hop-1(ep171) dominant effects.

Finally, we also observed that aph-2 RNAi strongly enhances pen-1 and pen-2 mutant phenotypes. Homozygous adult pen-1 and pen-2 hermaphrodites segregating from heterozygous stocks have a normal-appearing germline and never exhibit glp-1-like sterility. In contrast, the corresponding pen-1; aph-2(RNAi) and pen-2; aph-2(RNAi) hermaphrodites display glp-1-like sterility at high penetrance (>50% of viable pen-1 or pen-2 homozygous progeny). These observations demonstrate that a variety genetic backgrounds with partially reduce presentilin pathway activity can be enhanced to stronger phenotypes by an RNAi-mediated reduction in aph-2 activity. The data demonstrate a functional interaction of aph-2 with presentilins and pen-1 and pen-2.

Structure of APH-2 and APH-2 related human and fly proteins. APH-2 contains a PSORT2 predicted cleavable signal sequence and 1 to 3 transmembrane domains predicted by PSORT2 and TopPred2. APH-2 is 18% identical in amino acid sequence to the predicted human protein encoded by the nearly full-length cDNA KIAA0253 (Nagase, T. et al. DNA research (1996) 3: 321-329). In addition, APH-2 shows a similar level of identity to a Drosophila protein predicted from contigged ESTs generated at Exelixis, Inc. The human and Drosophila APH-2 related proteins are 30% identical and Clustal alignments of the 3 proteins show conservation over entire length of each protein.

Methods: RNA mediated interference (RNAi). RNAi of specific genes was generally done using dsRNA prepared from templates of PCR-amplified genomic DNA fragments. The 5' end of the PCR primers contained the promoter sequences for T7 RNA polymerease and the 3' regions were designed such that they amplified one or more exons of the targeted gene. PCR reactions, employing 5mmole of each primer, and 0.5 mg of wild-type genomic in a 50ml reaction, were done using the Expand kit (Roche Biochemicals, Summerville, NJ), according to the manufacture's protocols. The PCR conditions were as follows: an initial denaturation at 95 C for 30sec, followed by 35 cycles of 94 C for 30sec, 55 C for 15 sec, 72 C for 1min, and a final extension at 72 C for 3min. Amplified DNA was ethanol precipitated

and resuspended in 20ml of RNAse-free water. A portion of the PCR product was used as template for a T7 polymerase-directed in vitro transcription reaction according to the manufacturer's instructions (Promega, Inc). Reactions were precipitated with ethanol and RNA was resuspended in 20 ml of RNAse-free water and 10 ml 3X IM buffer (20mM KPO4 pH7.5, 3mM K+Citrate pH 7.5, 2% PEG 6000). The complementary sense- and anti- sense RNAs were annealed by incubation at 68 C for 10 minutes, followed by incubation 37 C for 30 minutes, and then centrifuged through a 0.45 um cellulose acetate filter. Microinjection of RNA was done as described (Fire et al., Development (1991) 113:503-514) using hermaphrodites at the L4 or young adult stage. Injected worms were recovered in M9 buffer (per liter: 30g Na2HPO4, 15g KH2PO4, 2.5g NaCl, 5g NH4Cl) for 10-30 minutes, transferred to individual plates, and then transferred to new plates daily. The first generation self-progeny of injected hermaphrodites were inspected for RNAi induced phenotypes by observation in the dissecting microscope or in the compound microscope equipped with Nomarski differential interference optics.

C. elegans strains used. Methods for handling and culturing C. elegans have been described (Brenner, S. Genetics (1974) 77: 71-94). C. elegans variation. Bristol strain N2 represents wild type and is largely isogenic with most of the mutant strains used here. Specific mutations used for genetic mapping and characterization included: LG I - unc-74(x19), dpy-5(e61), unc-29(e1072), fog-3(q443), dpy-24(s71). LG III - dpy-19(e1259ts), unc-119(e2498), pha-1(e2123), dpy-18(n499 or e364). LG IV - him-8(e1489). LG X lon-2(e678). Rearrangements: mnDp66 (X; I). All are described in C. elegans II. Deletion mutations that remove most or part of the of sel-12 or hop-1 coding region are described below. Because the sel-12 gene is sex-linked and sel-12 mutants are mating defective, the transfer of sel-12Δ between strains was usually accomplished using males that carry the chromosomal duplication mnDp66 (X; I) which carries a complementing sel-12+ allele.

SNP Screening by DHPLC: Candidate SNPs were amplified separately from CB4856 and N2 genomic DNA. The PCR products were mixed, denatured and reannealed to create heterozygote molecules for screening by Denaturing HPLC (DHPLC). Each SNP was screened at 5 different temperatures using the same separation gradient. A SNP was deemed authentic when a heteroduplex was detected in the heterozygous state but not in the homozygous starting strains. The appropriate temperature for each SNP was noted and used for screening that SNP on recombinant worms.

SNP Scoring on recombinant worms: Lysates from appropriate recombinants were used as genomic DNA templates for amplifying the SNPs by PCR. These crude PCR products were then run on DHPLC using the appropriate temperatures for each SNP identified above.

For each recombinant, each SNP was typed and the data input into a spreadsheet at random. The physical order of the SNPs was then determined from AceDB. This generated a haplotype for each recombinant, and the locations at which recombination events occurred was noted.

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Isolation and characterization of sel-12 and hop-1 deletion mutant strains. Deletion alleles of sel-12 and hop-1 were obtained by the two-step method of Plasterk (Plasterk, R. C. elegans: Modern Biological Analysis of an Organism (1995) pp. 59-80) using mut-2 as a source of Tc1 transposon mutator activity. sel-12(ep6) (hereinafter referred to as sel-12Δ) is a deletion mutation that removes amino acids 34 to 441 of the sel-12 open reading frame. hop-1(ep90) (hereinafter referred to as hop-1) is a 722 bp deletion that starts at amino acid 216 in the hop-1 open reading frame and terminates within the gene's 3' untranslated region. The sel-12Δ and hop-1Δ single mutants were backcrossed at least 10 times to wild-type (C. elegans variation. bristol strain N2, supra) before phenotypic characterization and construction of double mutants. The sel-12Δ single mutant has an egg-laying defective phenotype similar to that of previously-described sel-12(lf) mutants (Levitan, D. and Greenwald, I. Nature (1995) 377:351-354). The hop-1Δ mutant has no gross phenotypic abnormalities, similarly to hop-1 deletion alleles described by others (Westlund, B. et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci (1999) 96: 2497-2502).

To provide a source of sel-12 Δ ; hop-1 Δ double mutants that lack maternal sel-12+ activity, we constructed a balanced sel-12 Δ /sel-12 Δ ; hop-1 Δ +/+ unc-74 strain. This strain segregates doubly mutant sel-12 Δ ; hop-1 Δ hermaphrodites that exhibit a completely penetrant sterile phenotype with germline proliferation defects characteristic of glp-1(lf) mutants (Austin, J. and Kimble, J., Cell (1987) 51:589-599). In addition, these worms have a fully penetrant 2 anchor cell phenotype and an everted vulva phenotype that is reminiscent of vulval defects caused by lin-12(lf) mutations.

Isolation of enhancers of sel-12Δ. Enhancer alleles of pen-1 and pen-2 were obtained after mutagenesis of a homozygous sel-12Δ strain or, in later experiments, a sel-12Δ; unc-74(x19) strain (the unc-74 mutation lies near hop-1 on chromosome I and was included to provide a built-in mapping resource). XX hermaphrodites of either genotype were mutagenized with ethyl methane sulfonate as described (Brenner, S. Genetics (1974) 77: 71-94). In the F1 generation, one (or sometimes two) hermaphrodites were picked onto individual growth plates (approximately 55,000 plates total). Three to five days later, the plates were screened for the appearance of sterile F2 progeny with a "dark" appearance indicative of a defect in germline proliferation. Candidate sterile mutants were then screened by Nomarski difference interference microscopy to identify those which exhibit glp-1 like sterility similar to sel-12Δ; hop-1Δ worms.

A set of 44 candidates identified in this way were subjected to a cross scheme designed to determine whether or not the sterile phenotype in these mutants was dependent on the worm's sel-12 genotype as would be expected for a sel-12 enhancer. For this test, each candidate was crossed to dpy-19 III; him-8; lon-2 males and the resulting cross-progeny were picked onto individual plates. In the following generation, the presence of sterile lon-2/lon-2 progeny (which are sel-12+/sel-12+ in the absence of recombination) indicate that sterile phenotype was not dependent on a loss of sel-12+ activity and was possibly due to a mutation in one of the known glp-1 pathway genes (glp-1, lag-1, lag-2). 29 candidates analyzed in this way were sel-12 independent and thus were rejected as possible presenilin enhancers. For 26 of the 29 rejected candidates, the mutation causing sterility segregated in trans to dpy-19, which is the expected behavior for a glp-1 allele. 9 of these LG III mutations failed to complement the sterile phenotype of known glp-1 alleles; the other 17 LG III mutations were not tested.

For the remaining 15 candidates, the Glp sterile phenotype did not reappear in the F2 generation, a result consistent with the presence of an enhancer mutation whose interaction with sel- 12 is rescued by maternal sel-12+ activity. This explanation was tested by picking sel-12/sel-12 worms in the F2 generation onto individual plates and examining their progeny for reappearance of glp-1-like sterility in the next generation. This was the result observed for each of the remaining 15 candidates. A combination of complementation tests, meiotic mapping, and sequence analysis of mutant alleles demonstrated that the each candidates carried a mutation in either hop-1 (8 candidates) or in either of two newly-identified genes, pen-1 (4 candidates) or pen-2 (3 candidates).

Pen-1 mapping, characterization, cloning, and computational analysis: Genetic mapping of pen-1 was done in sel-12 Δ backgrounds and was based on the glp-1-like sterility phenotype of doubly mutant pen-1; sel-12 Δ worms. We initially mapped pen-1(ep140) to chromosome I between unc-29 and dpy-24. Further mapping with visible markers narrowed the position to between unc-29 and fog-3, a 1.1 MB interval. From heterozygotes of the genotype pen-1/unc-29 fog-3 trans-heterozygotes, 16/20 Unc-29 non-Fog-3 recombinants and 1/4 Fog-3 non-Unc-29 recombinants segregated pen-1.

Finer mapping was done using SNP markers that are polymorphic between the N2 Bristol strain from which pen-1 mutants were derived and strain CB4856 Hawaiian strain of C.elegans. The Genome Sequencing Center (St. Louis, MO) has identified an large number of potential SNPs in CB4856 (http://genome.wustl.edu/gsc/CEpolymorph/snp.shtml). Four of these potential SNPs in the unc- 29 to fog-3 interval were confirmed by testing with an SNP genotyping assay that is based on separation of heteroduplex PCR products by denaturing HPLC (Underhill PA, et al., Genome Res. 1997 Oct;7(10):996-1005). Initial

mapping against these SNPs was done by constructing heterozygotes of the genotypes unc-29 pen-1/ CB4856 or pen-1 dpy-24/CB4956 and picking Unc-29 non-Pen-1 or Dpy-24 non-Pen-1 recombinants. Additional non-Pen-1 recombinants were isolated from unc-29 pen-1 fog-3/ CB4856 heterozygotes. Among 50 Unc-29 non-Pen-1 recombinants, 9 had cross-overs occurring to the right of the C31H5 SNP, placing pen-1 to the right of this marker. Among a combined set of 45 Dpy-24 non-Pen-1 or Fog-3 non-Pen-1 recombinants, 4 had cross-overs to the left of the F14B4 SNP, placing pen-1 left of this marker. The combined data positioned pen-1 to the ~240 KB interval between the C31H5 and F14B4 SNPs.

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For mapping pen-1 to smaller intervals, additional SNPs lying in the C45G3 to F14B4 interval were identified by DNA sequencing. Six approximately 2 KB segments of DNA in the interval were amplified by PCR of N2 and CB4856 genomic DNA and end sequenced. In some cases, additional sequencing primers were used to generate internal sequence. SNPs between N2 and CB4856 were identified by sequence alignment and ~200 bp PCR products were designed around each high quality candidate. These 200 bp products were screened and scored by DHPLC as described above. This analysis positioned pen-1 between 2 SNPs, one on cosmid C45G3 and the other on cosmid F36H2, that lie approximately 52 KB from one another.

Mutation detection. Two single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), labeled C45G3A and F36H2A, defined a 52kb genomic interval, pen-1, within which seven predicted candidate genes resided. A 30kb gene-rich section of this 52kb interval was resequenced in 3 worms whose mutation had been mapped genetically to this region, ep140, ep169, and ep170. All DNA sequencing reactions were performed using standard protocols for the BigDye sequencing reagents (Applied Biosystems, Inc. Foster City, CA) and products were analyzed using ABI 377 DNA sequencers.

Trace data obtained from the ABI 377 DNA sequencers was analyzed and assembled into contigs using the Phred-Phrap programs (Gordon, Genome Res. (1998) 8:195-202). The resequence data was then compared to the wildtype strain, N2, for polymorphism. This analysis identified a third position base change, G to an A, at 191AA in the VF36H2L.1 gene (GI# 2815036) in three pen-1 alleles, ep140, ep169 and ep170, resulting in an amino acid change from a tryptophan (W) to stop (*). Further sequencing analysis of unmapped mutants revealed another mutation in worm ep216 within the same codon, but in the second position, also a G to an A, resulting in the same amino acid change. Analysis of human pen-1 led us to identify the novel pen-1B protein.

Pen-2 mapping, characterization, cloning, and computational analysis. We initially positioned pen-2(ep220) to the left of unc-25 on chromosome III. From hermaphrodites of

the genotype pen-2/ dpy-18 unc-25, 4/4 non-Dpy-18 Unc-25 recombinants segregated pen-2 and 0/21 Dpy-18 non-Unc-25 recombinants segregated pen-2. Of 70 dpy-18 unc- 25 homozygotes picked from the same heterozygous hermaphrodites, only 2 segregated pen-2, indicating that pen-2 lies relatively close to dpy-18 and probably to the left of this gene. Further mapping positioned pen-1 between pha-1 and dpy-18: from pen-1/ pha-1 dpy-19; sel-12 Δ hermaphrodites, 1/14 non-Pha-1 Dpy-1 recombinants picked up pen-2. These data positioned pen-2 between pha-1 and dpy-18 interval, an approximately 240 KB interval, and suggested pen-2 lies close to dpy-18.

Identification of pen-2 as predicted gene T28D6.9: We determined that pen-2 is the predicted gene T28D6.9 (GI#3873415) based on 1) RNAi of predicted genes in the pha-1 to dpy- 18 interval and 2) mutation detection. For 28 of the 31 genes in the interval, primers tailed with T7 promoter sequence were used to amplify selected coding region using either a first-strand cDNA pool or genomic DNA as template as described above. Double-stranded RNA was synthesized from each PCR product and injected into sel-12 Δ homozygotes. RNAi of T28D6.9 produced the expected pen-2 phenotypes among the progeny of injected worms, including glp-1- like sterility in sel-12Δ worms and an Aph embryonic arrest phenotype after injection into N2 and sel-12 worms. Mutation detection of the T28D6.9 open reading frame identified nonsense mutations in each of three pen-2 alleles (ep219, ep220, ep221). Briefly, The single mutant in this group, ep220, was tested by sequencing a PCR product amplified in an ep220 lysate and wild-type strain. This analysis identified a G to A mutation at 74AA that resulted in a tryptophan (W) to stop (*). Additional sequencing analysis of unmapped mutants revealed that there were 2 more mutants in this group. The ep219 worm had a G to A change in the third position of 74AA that produced a W to a *. The ep221 worm had a G to A change in another W that also resulted in a stop codon at 36AA. These three changes all effect highly conserved trytophans that could significantly alter or ablate the function of the T28D6.9 gene.

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V. <u>Cell-based reporter assays.</u>

We developed a cell culture gamma secretase assay based on a reporter construct carrying the C-terminal 99 amino acids of APP fused to a Gal4VP16 transcriptional activator protein. The Gal4 moiety is retained at the cell surface by the APP transmembrane domain until presentilin-dependent cleavage releases it to translocate to the nucleus and activate transcription of a UAS-luciferase reporter transgene. In assay validation experiments, a known gamma secretase inhibitor completely blocked reporter gene activity, and known dominant negative presentilin mutations also inhibited the reporter activity. A conceptually similar assay has been shown previously to work in Drosophila in vivo using a UAS-beta-galactosidase transgene reporter. Beta-galactosidase reporter gene activity, and hence

gamma-secretase-like protease activity have been shown to be absolutely dependent on the presence of presenilin in this in vivo assay.

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Our data show that inhibition of pen-1, pen-2, aph-2 or presenilin results in a strong reduction of steady state presenilin protein levels, and a correlated reduction of gammasecretase activity. The effects of pen-1 or aph-2 inhibition is equally strong, and pen-2 nearly as strong, with respect to both reduction of gamma secretase activity and presenilin protein reduction as is presentilin inhibition itself. Presentlin reduction is verified in multiple cellbased systems, including Drosophila and human cell systems, using several inhibitors, including RNAi, heterocyclic compounds identified in the disclosed screens, and intrabodies. These data provide assays for a functional interaction of the pen genes and presenilin. Hence, the invention provides a method for specifically detecting a stress that alters a functional interaction of a presentlin enhancer (pen) polypeptide with a presentlin by introducing a predetermined stress into a system which provides a functional interaction of a pen polypeptide with a presenilin, whereby the system provides a stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin, wherein the absence of the stress, the system provides an unbiased interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin; and detecting the stressbiased interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin as a change in an amount of presenilin in the system, wherein the amount may be expressed as an amount of presenilin N or C-terminal fragments (NTFs), presenilin holoprotein, or a ratio thereof, wherein a difference between the stress-biased and unbiased interactions indicates that the stress alters the interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin.

All publications and patent applications cited in this specification are herein incorporated by reference as if each individual publication or patent application were specifically and individually indicated to be incorporated by reference. Although the foregoing invention has been described in some detail by way of illustration and example for purposes of clarity of understanding, it will be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art in light of the teachings of this invention that certain changes and modifications may be made thereto without departing from the spirit or scope of the appended claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A method for specifically detecting a stress that alters a functional interaction of a presenilin enhancer (pen) polypeptide with Notch or APP processing, the method comprising steps:

introducing a predetermined stress into a system which provides a functional interaction of a pen polypeptide with Notch or APP processing, whereby the system provides a stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide with Notch or APP processing, wherein the absence of the stress, the system provides unbiased interaction of the pen polypeptide with Notch or APP processing; and

detecting the stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide with Notch or APP processing, wherein a difference between the stress-biased and unbiased interactions indicates that the stress alters the interaction of the pen polypeptide with Notch or APP processing;

wherein the system is selected from the group consisting of: (i) a viable cell expressing the pen polypeptide wherein the pen polypeptide expression is determined to be non-natural or pathogenic, and (ii) an in vitro, cell-free mixture comprising a determined amount of the pen polypeptide,

wherein the pen polypeptide has sequence similarity to a pen polypeptide selected from the group consisting of: human, rat, mouse, D. melanogaster and C. elegans pen-2; human, mouse, D. melanogaster and C. elegans pen-1; and human pen-1B, wherein the similarity is at least 20% identity.

2. A method for specifically detecting a stress that alters a functional interaction of an enhancer of presenilin (pen) polypeptide with APP processing, the method comprising steps:

introducing a predetermined stress into a system which provides a functional interaction of a pen polypeptide with APP processing, whereby the system provides a stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide with APP processing, wherein the absence of the stress, the system provides unbiased interaction of the pen polypeptide with APP processing; and

detecting the stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide with APP processing, wherein a difference between the stress-biased and unbiased interactions indicates that the stress alters the interaction of the pen polypeptide with APP processing;

wherein the system is selected from the group consisting of: (i) a viable cell expressing the pen polypeptide wherein the pen polypeptide expression is determined to be

non-natural or pathogenic, and (ii) an in vitro, cell-free mixture comprising a determined amount of the pen polypeptide,

wherein the pen polypeptide has sequence similarity to a pen polypeptide selected from the group consisting of: human, rat, mouse, D. melanogaster or C. elegans pen-2; human, mouse, D. melanogaster or C. elegans pen-1; human pen-1B; and human, D. melanogaster or C. elegans Aph-2, wherein the similarity is at least 20% identity.

3. A method for specifically detecting a stress that alters a functional interaction of a presentilin enhancer (pen) polypeptide with a presentilin, the method comprising steps:

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introducing a predetermined stress into a system which provides a functional interaction of a pen polypeptide with a presenilin, whereby the system provides a stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin, wherein the absence of the stress, the system provides an unbiased interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin; and

detecting the stress-biased interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin as a change in an amount of presenilin in the system, wherein the amount may be expressed as an amount of presenilin N or C-terminal fragments (NTFs), presenilin holoprotein, or a ratio thereof, wherein a difference between the stress-biased and unbiased interactions indicates that the stress alters the interaction of the pen polypeptide with the presenilin;

wherein the system is selected from the group consisting of: (i) a viable cell expressing the pen polypeptide wherein the pen polypeptide expression is determined to be non-natural or pathogenic, and (ii) an in vitro, cell-free mixture comprising a determined amount of the pen polypeptide,

wherein the pen polypeptide has sequence similarity to a pen polypeptide selected from the group consisting of: human, rat, mouse, D. melanogaster and C. elegans pen-2; human, mouse, D. melanogaster and C. elegans pen-1; and human pen-1B, wherein the similarity is at least 20% identity.

- 4. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the pen polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of: human, rat, mouse, D. melanogaster and C. elegans pen-2.
- 5. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the pen polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of: human, mouse, D. melanogaster and C. elegans pen-1.

6. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the pen polypeptide is human pen-1B.

- 7. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein said the pen polypeptide is a naturally-occurring pen polypeptide identifiable in a sel- 12Δ (delta) homozygous C. elegans genetic mutation enhancer screen.
- 8. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7, wherein the identity is at least 50%.
- 9. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7, wherein the identity is 100%.

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- 10. A method according to claim 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9, wherein the functional interaction comprises binding of the pen polypeptide with a component of Notch or APP processing.
 - 11. A method according to claim 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9, wherein the functional interaction comprises binding of the pen polypeptide with a component of Notch or APP processing and the component is a presentilin or γ-secretase.
 - 12. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 wherein the system is the viable cell and the stress is a pharmacologically active agent.
- 20 13. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 wherein the system is the viable cell and the stress is a deficiency in functional expression of the pen polypeptide.
 - 14. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 wherein the system is the viable cell and the stress is a deficiency in functional expression of the pen polypeptide by virtue of genomic disruption of otherwise endogenous alleles encoding the pen polypeptide.
 - 15. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 wherein the system is the viable cell and the stress is a deficiency in functional expression of the pen polypeptide by virtue of coexpression of a polynucleotide comprising a sequence antisense of an endogenous allele encoding the pen polypeptide.

16. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the system is the viable cell and the cell is in situ (resident in an animal host).

- 17. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the system is the viable cell and the cell is in vitro (isolated from an animal host).
- 18. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the system is the in vitro, cell-free mixture and the stress is a pharmacologically active agent.
- 19. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the detecting step detects an indication of Alzheimer's disease.
 - 20. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the detecting step detects a transcriptional reporter of notch.
- 21. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the detecting step detects the generation of Aβ(beta).
 - 22. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the detecting step detects the generation of $A\beta$ (beta) using an $A\beta$ -specific antibody.
 - 23. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the detecting step detects a structural alteration in the pen polypeptide.
- 24. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the detecting step detects a structural alteration in the pen polypeptide using a pen polypeptide-specific antibody.
 - 25. A method according to claim 3, wherein the change in amount of detectable presentilin is detected by presentilin-specific antibodies.

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- 26. A method according to claim 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11,, wherein the system is the viable cell and comprises a gamma secretase reporter.
- 27. A method according to claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the system is the viable cell and comprises a gamma secretase reporter comprising a C-terminal APP Gal4 fusion protein and a UAS-reporter transgene, whereby cleavage of the fusion protein by gamma secretase releases Gal4, which in turn activates transcription of the transgene to express the reporter.
- 28. A method according to claim 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein the pen polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of: human, D. melanogaster or C. elegans Aph -2.
 - 29. An isolated polypeptide comprising a sequence having at least 50% sequence similarity to SEQ ID NO:1; wherein the polypeptide or fragment cross-reacts with a human pen-1B specific antibody.
 - 30. A polypeptide according to claim 28 wherein the polypeptide binds a human presentiln or γ -secretase.
- 31. A polypeptide according to claim 29 or 30 comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

	SEQ ID NO:6, res 1-14;	SEQ ID NO:6, res 115-126;
	SEQ ID NO:6, res 6-15;	SEQ ID NO:6, res 130-140;
	SEQ ID NO:6, res 10-20;	SEQ ID NO:6, res 139-151;
	SEQ ID NO:6, res 25-46,	SEQ ID NO:6, res 166-182;
25	SEQ ID NO:6, res 62-71;	SEQ ID NO:6, res 184-198;
	SEQ ID NO:6, res 67-76;	SEQ ID NO:6, res 214-232; and
*	SEQ ID NO:6, res 72-95;	SEQ ID NO:6, res 246-257.

32. A polypeptide according to claim 29 comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NOS:2-10.

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33. A polypeptide according to claim 29 comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NO:6, residues 1-254; SEQ ID NO:6, residues 4-255; SEQ ID NO:6, residues 9-257; and SEQ ID NO:6, residues 2-255.

34. A polypeptide according to claim 29 comprising SEQ ID NO:2.

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- 35. A recombinant polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide according to claim 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 or 34..
- 36. A recombinant polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide according to claim 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 or 34 contained in a vector or a cell.
 - 37. A method of making a polypeptide, said method comprising steps: introducing a polynucleotide according to claim 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 or 34 into a host cell or cellular extract, incubating said host cell or extract under conditions whereby said polynucleotide is expressed as a transcript and said transcript is expressed as a translation product comprising said polypeptide.
 - 38. A method of screening for an agent that modulates the interaction of a pen-1B polypeptide to a binding target, said method comprising the steps of:
 - incubating a mixture comprising:

an isolated polypeptide according to claim 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 or 34, a binding target of said polypeptide, and a candidate agent;

under conditions whereby, but for the presence of said agent, said polypeptide specifically binds said binding target at a reference affinity;

detecting the binding affinity of said polypeptide to said binding target to determine an agent-biased affinity,

wherein a difference between the agent-biased affinity and the reference affinity indicates that said agent modulates the binding of said polypeptide to said binding target.

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39. A method according to claim 38, wherein said binding target comprises a human presentilin or γ -secretase.

- 40. A method of screening for an agent that modulates the interaction of a pen-1B polypeptide to a binding target, said method comprising the steps of:
- incubating a polynucleotide according to claim 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 or 34 under conditions whereby the polypeptide is expressed;

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incubating a mixture comprising said polypeptide, a binding target of said polypeptide, and a candidate agent under conditions whereby, but for the presence of said agent, said polypeptide specifically binds said binding target at a reference affinity;

detecting the binding affinity of said polypeptide to said binding target to determine an agent-biased affinity,

wherein a difference between the agent-biased affinity and the reference affinity indicates that said agent modulates the binding of said polypeptide to said binding target.

- 41. A method according to claim 40, wherein said polynucleotide is in a cell.
 - 42. A method according to claim 40, wherein said binding target comprises a presentilin or γ-secretase.

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2.5			•		565	_	_	_,	_1.	570		. .	-1	۵.	575	
35	Pro	Thr	Val		His	Trp	Leu	Thr		rne	ATA	ьeu	стĀ		Asp	гÀв
		ėv.	• <u>-</u> i ×	580	vv 3	7	0		585	Co~	· ·	0	114 ÷	590	01.	~1 =
	Glu	Thr	Leu	ASN	vai	ràs	ser		μλε	ser	cys	ser		ьeu	GIY	GIN
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	2	•	675					680		- 3 -			685	a 1	D=0	C1v
30	Ile	Asn		Lys	Ala	Asp	• -		Pne	TIE	Ala		Arg	GIU	PIO	GIY
				_			695					700				
	-	Val	ser	Tyr			£.,.									
0.	705	' .									•					•
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	Thr	_	Thr	Lys	Val	Ala		Pro	Leu	Met	Ala		GÏII	Pne	ьeu	Tyr
30	_	530	<u>.</u>		_	• • •	535	~	D	*	Db -	540	21-	717	Par	Üът.
		Phe	Leu	Gin	Ser		Asp	Сув	Pro	heu		гÀг	Ala	Ald	SEI	560
. 1	545		_			550		T	D	D	555	7	The sace	Tle	Sor	
	Pro	· GTÀ	Ser	Gin		Thr	AŞII	ьeu	PIO		met.	Arg	ıyı	116	575	vai
25	_	a `		.	565		00-	ė	01. -	570 To ~~	Mha	Ur see	λ~~	Leu		Gl v
35	Leu	GIÀ	Gly		GIN	GIU	ser	ser		īŊī	ınr	ıyr	мтд	590	Ten	CIY
	:	•	.	580	01-	T	C1-	D~~	585	71.	u -	7 ~~	705		CVE	ሞኮ ×
	ıyr	Leu	Leu	ser	GIN	ьeu	Gïu		Asp	тте	nis	wrd	_	VDII	Cys	
			595					600					605			

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					85	T	0	~1 ~			Clar		The	7. 7 -	•	Car
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	خدفو	.	• :	100		Thi inc	7747	Com	105	T 011	ol v	mh~	Clar	110	Mét	Ser
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	D)	n			165	G1	T	Dho	Tara	170	Clar	TIO	LOU	Leu		Val
	Pne	Pne	Asp	_	Cys	GIU	ъу	FILE	185	ııp	Gry	776	Heu.	190	114	V (4.1
	T 015	a 1	mb se	180	T 011	. T. 033	Ual	eo*		G] n	Thir	ule	TI.	Ser	Ser	Tur
15	neu	GTÀ	195	HTB	Dea	nea	Vai	200	ALG	GIN	1111	11115	205	Jer		
. : .	. The service	Clv) an	Len	τla	Ser		Phe	Tle	Tle	T _i en		Leu	Met	Lvs
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	Leu	Leu		H18	Leu	Leu	vaı		Ala	GIn	Thr	Pne		ser	ser	ıyr
		•1	195	•	7	87.	G	200	Db -	T 1 -	-1-	T	205	T 011	W	a 1
35	ıyr		тте	Asn	Leu	wra		ATA	rne	тте	шe		val	neu	met	GIĀ
در	MJ. a.	210		nl	T. 633	T	215	01	0 3	0	۵	220	60~	Low	T	Mát
		-	Ala	rne	Leu		ATS	GTÅ	GIÅ	ser	-	arg	ser	neu	тÅв	
	225		T 011	~~	Gln	230	Lize	λα÷	Dhe		235	Д г.	Δen	Gla	Δ ~~	240
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215

210

220

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       tttgaatagt ataaacccag gtgagacagc accatctatg cgtctgctgg cctatgtttc 360
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       cttcgggcca gggacagtgg gaattcatgg tgattctccc caattcttgc tttattcagc 480
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       agcccagacc ttgataagtt catattatgg tataaacctc gcgtcagcgt ttataatact 660
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925

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ggggaccagc acatcccaaa ctgcagacta catctttagg ggaagcacaa ctgtgccttt 840

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       tttgaaaagt ataaatccag gtgacacagc accgtctatg cgactgctgg cttatgtttc 360
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       gggtaccagc acctcccaaa cggcagacta aatctttagt ggaagcacca ctgtgccgtt 840
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      attetggttt gtgtetetee tgatttegte eettgtatgg tteattgeaa gagteattat 180
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       tttgaagagc ataaacccgg gtgagacagc accetetatg cgactcctgg cetaggtttc 360
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